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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
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Draft report

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Chapter I
Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

B. Matters brought to the attention of the Council

Recommendations of the Permanent Forum

International expert group meeting on the theme "Indigenous languages: preservation and revitalization (articles 13, 14 and 16 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples)"

1. It is estimated that more than half of the world's languages will become extinct by 2100 (see E/C.19/2005/7). The vast majority of the languages under threat are indigenous languages. For that reason, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, at its fourteenth session, recommended that the United Nations organize an expert group meeting on the preservation and revitalization of indigenous languages. The Permanent Forum welcomes the report of the meeting (E/C.19/2016/10) and encourages Member States, as well as relevant United Nations entities, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), to carefully consider its findings and recommendations.

2. The Permanent Forum recommends that States recognize the language rights of indigenous peoples and develop language policies to promote and protect indigenous languages, with a focus on quality education in indigenous languages, including through supporting full immersion methods such as languages nests and innovative methods such as nomadic schools. It is essential that States develop evidence-based legislation and policies to promote and protect indigenous languages and, in that regard, they should collect and disseminate baseline information on the

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status of indigenous languages. These activities should be conducted in close cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned.

3. The Permanent Forum recommends that States and the United Nations system, including United Nations country teams, provide support, including funding, for the efforts of indigenous peoples' institutions to preserve and revitalize their languages, with the particular goal of fluency. Such efforts may include the sharing of positive experiences and the establishment of informal networks or caucuses involved in the promotion and revitalization of indigenous languages, as well as the use of information and communication technologies in indigenous languages. It is important that States provide adequate funding for language revitalization as well as the preservation of cultural heritage. In addition, States should facilitate funding for indigenous language projects from external donors, including the private sector, in accordance with law.

4. The Permanent Forum recommends that the General Assembly, by 2020, proclaim an International Year of Indigenous Languages and draw attention to the critical loss of indigenous languages and the urgent need to preserve, revitalize and promote indigenous languages and to adopt further urgent steps at the national and international levels.

5. The Permanent Forum recommends that UNESCO, with the participation of indigenous peoples, urgently declare as the organization's priority the preservation, revitalization and promotion of indigenous languages. UNESCO is also urged to initiate international processes for the establishment of international standards on the preservation of indigenous languages. In particular, the Permanent Forum recommends that UNESCO collaborate with efforts led by indigenous peoples and others to map indigenous languages, such as the Endangered Languages Project.

Studies prepared by members of the Permanent Forum

6. In the light of the dire effects of climate change, such as forced relocation and loss of culture and livelihood, on vulnerable small island Pacific States, the Permanent Forum recommends that United Nations entities, including the International Seabed Authority, UN-Oceans, the Convention on Biological Diversity and UNESCO, comply with and implement the relevant articles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (articles 18, 27 and 32) to ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples. This should include meaningful participation, such as dedicated indigenous representation within each of these United Nations entities, and regard for the indigenous world views.